

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 175

By Haile

A RESOLUTION to honor Doug Varnado on the occasion of his retirement from ministry.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly should honor those citizens who have answered a divine call to the ministry and who have served with dedication, vigor, and enthusiasm to perform God's work for their congregations and their communities; and

WHEREAS, Doug Varnado is one such estimable person, who will take his much-deserved retirement from his role as senior pastor at Community Church of Hendersonville; and

WHEREAS, born on April 25, 1953, and raised in Charleston, South Carolina, Doug Varnado completed his bachelor's degree at Middle Tennessee State University, his master's degree in education at Tennessee State University, his Master of Arts in Religion degree at Lipscomb University, his master's degree in divinity in theology at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, and his doctorate in missiology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, after serving as a missionary in London with his beloved wife, Linda, Mr. Varnado returned to Nashville in the early 1990s and began teaching at Lipscomb University, accepting a concurrent post in ministry at Community Church of Hendersonville in 1992; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, Mr. Varnado accepted the appointment of senior pastor at Community Church, and under his guidance, the church became an independent nondenominational church, began to use instrumental music in worship, ministered to other churches with a weekly Kingdom Prayer during their Sunday service, provided a home for the Hispanophone church "Jesus Breaks the Chains" when their building suffered fire damage, implemented Connect Groups to strengthen bonds among the church community, and supported the Friends Ministry, World Missions, and the 2023 Outdoor Ministry Center; and

WHEREAS, he has also welcomed community programs and organizations such as Room at the Inn, Homebound Meals, SMORES, Community Life Bridge, Alcoholics Anonymous, and many more into the culture of Community Church; and

WHEREAS, the number of lives touched by Mr. Varnado's pastoral leadership is countless, and the more than 400 weddings, 400 funerals, and 250 baptisms from both within and without his congregation are a comparatively small testament to a far larger impact; and

WHEREAS, apart from his work with Community Church, he continues to apply himself to community needs through his participation in such organizations as Cumberland Crisis Pregnancy Center, Mission Discovery, Hendersonville Samaritan Association, Nations University, Community Pastors Association, and the local Rotary Club; and

WHEREAS, married in 1976, Mr. Varnado and his wife are blessed to have two children, Nick and Kate, and three grandchildren, Westin, Gray, and Reagan; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Varnado is a living icon of God's work, whether through his consistent virtue and empathy or his gift of human relation, and he, not burying his talents, has multiplied the kingdom of God through his shepherding; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable and devout career as a minister, Doug Varnado has evinced the utmost spirituality, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his congregation; and

WHEREAS, we are delighted to recognize this committed Christian leader for his service to his community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Doug Varnado upon the occasion of his retirement from Community Church in Hendersonville as senior pastor and extend to him our heartfelt wishes for much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.